



News Release

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Date: August 5, 2005

Meeting Set to Develop Spring Rise Proposal

OMAHA – With additional data provided by the Army Corps of Engineers and Fish and Wildlife Service in hand, the 55 members of the Missouri River Spring Rise Plenary Group will conduct their final meeting on the development of a proposal for a “spring rise” from Gavins Point Dam on the Missouri River. To comply with the 2003 Amended Biological Opinion published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, releases from the reservoirs would be increased during the spring months to benefit the endangered pallid sturgeon.

The meeting will be held August 19 in Sioux Falls, S.D., at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 3200 W. Maple Street. The session will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The public is invited to attend, though there will not be a specific comment period. The meeting will be facilitated by CDR Associates, an independent collaborative decision making and conflict management firm, which is a contractor of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

The meeting will focus on reaching agreement on the development of protocols for conducting the rise, including criteria for starting and stopping it, as well as its size, timing and frequency.

At the July 28 meeting in Omaha, the Plenary Group members asked the Corps and Service for additional technical data to help in their challenge to develop a recommendation that complies with the 2003 Amended Biological Opinion issued by the US Fish and Wildlife Service while limiting the risk to both upstream and downstream river users.

The Missouri River Spring Rise Plenary Group is the central deliberating body of basin stakeholders for building a process to develop a consensus spring rise proposal to be submitted to the Corps this month. Implementation would be in March 2006. The group is made up of more than 50 representatives of federal agencies, tribes, states, and a wide range of agricultural, conservation, recreation, navigation and power special interest groups. Previous meetings were held in St. Joseph, Mo., Bismarck, N.D., and Omaha.

Information on the spring rise process is available at: <http://missouririver.ecr.gov> .